



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

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ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

PART I. PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

1. Project Title: Park County Rod & Gun Club

2. Type of Proposed Action:

Improvement of high power rifle line facility and replacement of an ageing trap machine.

3. Location Affected by Proposed Action:

The Park County Rod and Gun Club, of Park County, Montana, leases approximately 62 acres, from the Kensue Ranch of Park County, Montana. The property is located in the SE1/4 of Section 35, Township 1 South, Range 9 East, M.P.M. The property is northwest of Livingston, MT just off of Meigs Road.



Map 1 – Location of Park County Rod & Gun Club northwest of Livingston, MT

SITE PLAN

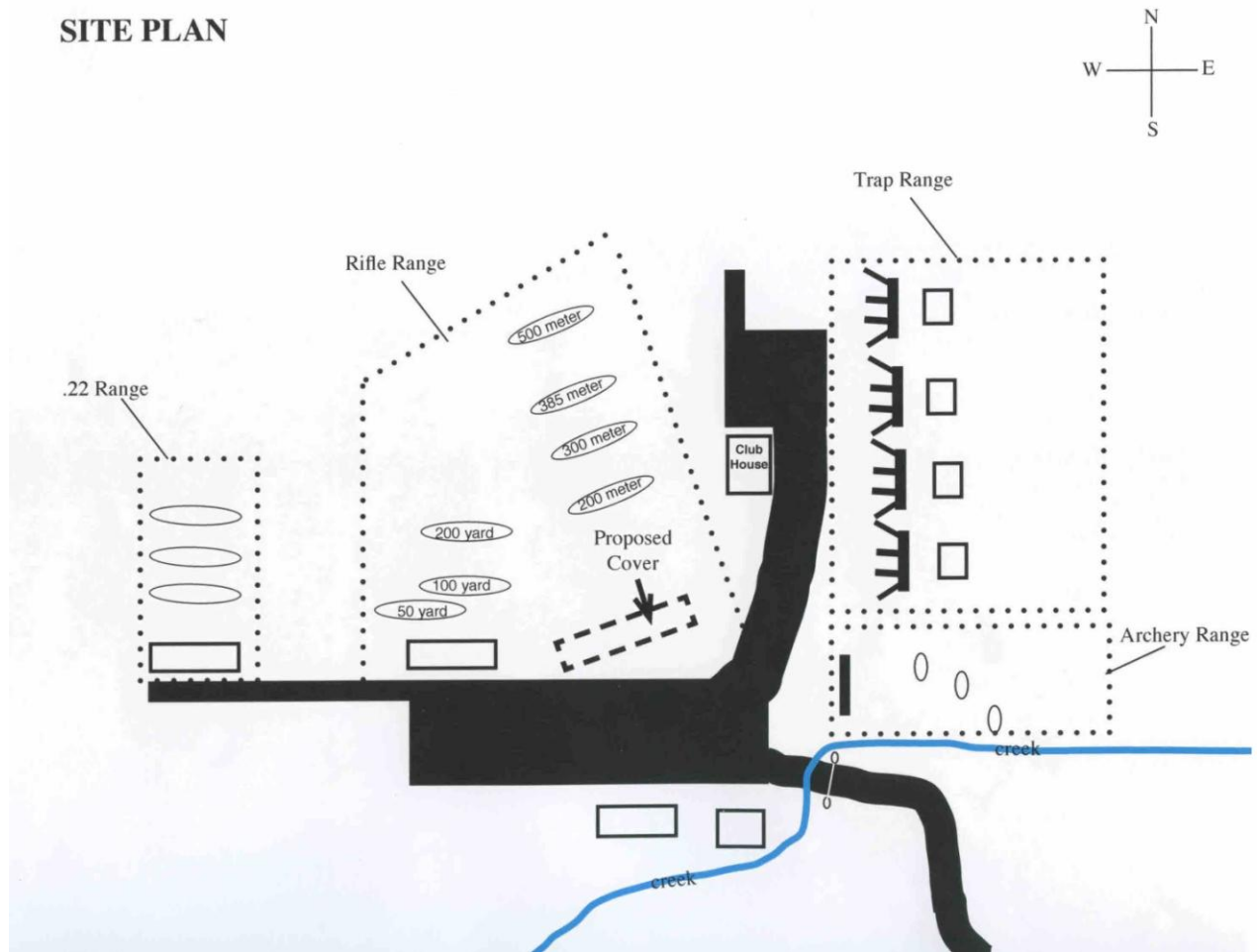


Figure 1 – Range layout. Creek is approximately 60' back from the edge of the proposed cover.

4. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action: MCA 87-1-276 through 87-1-279 (Legislative established policies and procedures for the establishment and improvement of shooting ranges) and MCA 87-2-105 (Departmental authority to expend funds to provide training in the safe handling and use of firearms and safe hunting practices). The Montana Legislature has authorized funding for the establishment of a Shooting Range Development Program providing financial assistance for the development of shooting ranges. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) has responsibility for the administration of the program, including the necessary guidelines and procedures governing applications for funding assistance under the program.

To be eligible for grant assistance, a private shooting club or a private organization:

- (a)(i) shall accept in its membership any person who holds or is eligible to hold a Montana hunting license and who pays club or organization membership fees;
- (ii) may not limit the number of members;
- (iii) may charge a membership fee not greater than the per-member share of the club's or organization's reasonable cost of provision of services, including establishment, improvement, and maintenance of shooting facilities and other membership services; and
- (iv) shall offer members occasional guest privileges at no cost to the member or invited guest and shall make a

reasonable effort to hold a public sight-in day each September, when the general public may use the shooting range for a day-use fee or at no cost; or
(b) shall admit the general public for a reasonable day-use fee.

5. Need for the Action(s):

Shooters do not have the facilities to hone their shooting skills at longer ranges. Consequently a range opportunity out to 500 yards would accommodate that need. Currently if shooters want to use berms at longer distances than 200 yards they need to shoot at an angle which has the potential for ricochets toward the club house. A covered firing line would prevent the shooters from aiming toward the club house when firing out to 500 yards. A cover is also needed to provide cover from the intensity of the sun during the summer months. The club also has a need to replace an aging trap machine.

6. Objectives for the Action(s):

Install a covered firing line as a sun shield and to prevent ricochets toward the club house. Replace an aging trap machine so that the club may maintain at least 4 operational traps during league and competition shooting.

7. Project Size: estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected:

The proposed improvements are a much small area than the total acreage and will be safely spread within the leased properties .

8. Affected Environment (A brief description of the affected area of the proposed project):

The property is leased ranch land and the surrounding properties are still pasture and grazing lands, with a State Section bordering on the east. The lessor still has the right to graze livestock upon the property during such times as the premises are not in use by Club members.

9. Description of Project:

- Pour a 10'X96' concrete pad
- Build a cover over the pad. The cover will consist of 6X6 posts at 8' intervals.
 - The roof will consist of 2X6 rafters at 2' intervals and will be sheeted with 5/8" OSB and "Tuff Rib" steel roofing.
- Purchase and install a new trap machine

10. List any Other Local, State, or Federal Agency that has Overlapping or Additional Jurisdiction:
None

(a) Permits, Licenses and/or Authorizations:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>	<u>Date Filed/#</u>
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N/A

Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	\$12,635

11. Affiliations, Cooperating Agencies, User Groups and/or Supporting Groups: The range hosts a variety of

educational shooting activities which include 4H trap, 4H archery, Hunter Education, Bow Hunter Education, Black Powder Cartridge Rifle (BPCR) Silhouette shooters, and Women's Intro to Shooting. The range also provides "free" sight-in days for the public in September.

12. History of the Planning and Scoping Process, and Any Public Involvement: Proposed range improvements proposals have been discussed within the membership of the club and with the associated project vendors, and contractors.

13. List of Agencies Consulted/Contacted During Preparation of the EA:
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

14. Names, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor:
Robert Labs, 8 Broken Wheel, Livingston, MT 59047 (406) 220-1033

15. Other Pertinent Information:

Shooting range applications require the participant's governing body to approve by resolution its submission of applications for shooting range-funding assistance. Resolution Date: April 27, 2011.

PART II. IDENTIFICATION OF THE PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES

The proposed alternative A, alternative B and the no action alternative were considered.

- **Alternative A (Proposed Alternative)** is as described in Part I, paragraph 9 (Description of Project). Improvement of high power rifle line facility and replacement of an ageing trap machine.
- **Alternative B (No Action Alternative)** Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Shooting Range Development Grant money would be denied and the area will remain as an active shooting range without improvements proposed.

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented: Only the proposed alternative and the no action alternative were considered. There were no other alternatives that were deemed reasonably available, nor prudent. Neither the proposed alternative nor the no action alternative would have significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences.

There are beneficial consequences to acceptance of the **Proposed Alternative (A)** Improvement of high power rifle line facility and replacement of an ageing trap machine.

The **No Action Alternative (B)** would be to not fund the improvements and the range will continue on with present conditions. Land use would remain the same.

Describe any Alternatives considered and eliminated from Detailed Study:
NONE

List and explain proposed mitigating measures (stipulations): None

PART III. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Abbreviated Checklist – The degree and intensity determines extent of Environmental Review. An abbreviated checklist may be used for those projects that are not complex, controversial, or are not in environmental sensitive areas.

Table 1. Potential impact on physical environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				X		
2. Terrestrial or aquatic life and/or habitats				X		#2
3. Introduction of new species into an area				X		
4. Vegetation cover, quantity & quality				X		
5. Water quality, quantity & distribution (surface or groundwater)				X		#5
6. Existing water right or reservation				X		
7. Geology & soil quality, stability & moisture				X		
8. Air quality or objectionable odors				X		
9. Historical & archaeological sites				X		#9
10. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy				X		
11. Aesthetics				X		

Comments (A description of potentially significant, or unknown, impacts and potential alternatives for mitigation must be provided.)

2. & 5. There are neither surface waters nor delineated wetlands on the range. A creek runs along the southern portion of the property but outside the range proper. The creek borders the leased property along the south side (See Map 2). The creek is approximately 60 feet from the nearest portion of the proposed firing line cover (See Figure 1).

9. This project uses no federal funds nor does it take place on state owned or controlled property; therefore, the Federal 106 Regulations and the State Antiques Act do not apply.

Table 2. Potential impacts on human environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Social structures and cultural diversity				X		
2. Changes in existing public benefits provided by wildlife populations and/or habitat				X		
3. Local and state tax base and tax revenue				X		
4. Agricultural production				X		
5. Human health				X		
6. Quantity & distribution of community & personal income				X		
7. Access to & quality of recreational activities				X		
8. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals (ordinances)				X		
9. Distribution & density of population and housing				X		
10. Demands for government services				X		
11. Industrial and/or commercial activity				X		

Comments (A description of potentially significant, or unknown, impacts and potential alternatives for mitigation must be provided.)

PART IV. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

All of the pertinent or potential impacts of the project have been reviewed, discussed, and analyzed. None of the project reviewed were complex, controversial, or located in an environmentally sensitive area. The projects being implemented are already on an existing range/alterd areas that together with the insignificant environmental effects of the proposed action, indicates that this should be considered the final version of the environmental assessment. There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative. The Park County Rod and Gun Club's proposed alternative, to provide a safe regulated shooting opportunity is supported by its members and the public. Therefore, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks should approve the proposed alternative (A) for the improvements as outlined in Part I, Para. 9.

PART V. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Does the proposed action involve potential risks or adverse effects, which are uncertain but extremely harmful if they were to occur? NO

Does the proposed action have impacts that are individually minor, but cumulatively significant or potentially significant? This proposed action has no impacts that are individually minor, but cumulatively significant or potentially significant. Cumulative impacts have been assessed considering any incremental impact of the proposed action when they are combined with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, and no significant impacts or substantially controversial issues were found. There are no extreme hazards created with this project and there are no conflicts with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan.

Recommendation and justification concerning preparation of EIS:

There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative; therefore an EIS is not required.

PART VI. EA CONCLUSION SECTION

Individuals or groups contributing to, or commenting on, this EA:

Robert Labs, 8 Broken Wheel, Livingston, MT
MT Fish Wildlife and Parks

EA prepared by: GENE R. HICKMAN

MS Wildlife Management
Ecological Assessments
Helena, MT 59602

Date Completed: June 29, 2011

Describe public involvement, if any:

This draft EA will be advertised on FWP's website and through a legal ad in the Livingston Enterprise announcing a public comment period. A press release will also announce the project and comment period that will end on August 5, 2011.